

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a supplier rating for a supplier, the method comprising:

defining an initial supplier rating matrix populated by either average supplier ratings or by ratings determined by prior knowledge of ~~said a~~ past history of said ~~supplier~~ supplier's performance relative to average suppliers;

defining a first job attribute vector, the first job attribute vector including a set of ~~sub-attributes~~ sub-attributes, the set of sub-attributes including at least one of a plurality of ranges of tolerance values, a plurality of ranges of quantity values, and a plurality of ranges of times;

defining a first performance vector, the first performance vector including a set of performance metrics;

wherein each performance metric is based upon the supplier's performance metric relative to ~~[[the]]~~ an average performance metric for other suppliers that perform ~~said a~~ job;

defining a first matrix;

calculating ~~[[a]]~~ the first matrix based on at least a first filter constant, the first performance vector, and the first job attribute vector;

wherein said first filter constant has a value between 0 and 1;

calculating a second matrix, the second matrix based on at least 1~~[[ -]]~~ minus the first filter constant and the initial matrix;

generating a feedback matrix by adding the first matrix to the second matrix;

calculating a plurality of performance ratings each corresponding to a metric from the set of metrics from the feedback matrix; and

calculating a final rating value in response to the plurality of performance ratings wherein the final rating is displayed to ~~[[the]]~~ a customer through an interface in order to assess ~~[[a]]~~ the supplier.

2-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the set of sub-attributes is defined using a technical requirements specification of a customer of a supplier.

7-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the set of performance metrics includes at least one of speed, quality, cost and service.

10-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture having computer-readable program means for creating a supplier rating for rating services of a supplier, the article comprising:

computer-readable program means for defining a first job attribute vector, the first job attribute vector including a set of sub-attributes, the set of sub-attributes including at least one of a plurality of ranges of tolerance values, a plurality of ranges of quantity values, and a plurality of ranges of times;

computer-readable program means for defining a first performance vector, the first performance vector including a set of performance metrics;

wherein each performance metric is based upon the supplier's performance metric relative to ~~[[the]]~~ an average performance metric for other suppliers that perform ~~said~~ a job;

computer-readable program means for defining an initial rating matrix;

said initial rating matrix populated by either average supplier ratings or by ratings determined by prior knowledge of ~~said~~ a past history of said ~~supplier~~ supplier's performance;

computer-readable program means for defining a first filter constant, wherein the first filter constant has a value between 0 and 1;

computer-readable program means for calculating a first matrix, the first matrix based on at least  $1 -$  the first filter constant and the initial rating matrix;

computer-readable program means for calculating a second matrix, the second matrix based on at least the first filter constant, the first performance vector, and the first job attribute vector;

computer-readable program means for adding the first matrix to the second matrix, wherein a feedback matrix is created;

computer-readable program means for calculating a plurality of performance ratings each corresponding to a metric from the set of metrics from the feedback matrix; and

computer-readable program means for calculating a final rating value in response to the plurality of performance ratings wherein the final rating is displayed to a customer through an interface in order to assess the supplier.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 19, wherein the set of sub-attributes is defined using a technical requirements specification of a customer of a supplier.

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ article of claim 19, wherein the set of performance metrics includes at least one of speed, quality, cost and service.

23. (Currently Amended) A system for creating a supplier rating for rating services of a supplier, the system including a CPU and a program stored in a computer readable medium configured to execute a set of interface modules, the system comprising:

an interface module that defines a first job attribute vector, the first job attribute vector including a set of sub-attributes, the set of sub-attributes including at least one of a plurality of ranges of tolerance values, a plurality of ranges of quantity values, and a plurality of ranges of times;

an interface module that defines a first performance vector, the first performance vector including a set of performance metrics;

wherein each performance metric is based upon the supplier's performance metric relative to ~~[[the]]~~ an average performance metric for other suppliers that perform ~~said a~~ a job;

an interface module that defines an initial supplier rating matrix;

an interface module that defines a first filter constant, wherein the first filter constant ~~[[is]]~~ has a value between 0 and 1;

an interface module that calculates a first matrix, the first matrix based on at least 1~~[[ -]]~~ minus the first filter constant and the initial rating matrix;

wherein said initial rating matrix is populated by either average supplier ratings or by ratings determined by prior knowledge of ~~said a~~ past history of said ~~supplier~~ supplier's performance;

an interface module that calculates a second matrix, the second matrix based on at least the first filter constant, the first performance vector and the first job attribute vector;

an interface module that adds the first matrix to the second matrix, wherein a feedback matrix is created;

an interface module that calculates a plurality of performance ratings each corresponding to a metric from the set of metrics from the feedback matrix; and

an interface module that calculates a final rating value in response to the plurality of performance ratings wherein the final rating is displayed to ~~[[the]]~~ a customer through an interface in order to assess ~~[[a]]~~ the supplier.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the set of sub-attributes is defined using a technical requirements specification of a customer of a supplier.

26. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23 wherein the set of performance metrics includes at least one of speed, quality, cost and service.

27. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a supplier rating for a supplier using a computerized server, comprising:

defining an initial supplier rating matrix populated by either average supplier ratings or by ratings determined by prior knowledge of ~~said a~~ past history of said ~~supplier~~ supplier's performance;

defining a first job attribute vector, the first job attribute vector including a set of ~~sub-attributes~~ sub-attributes, the set of sub-attributes including at least one of a plurality of ranges of tolerance values, a plurality of ranges of quantity values, and a plurality of ranges of times;

defining a first performance vector, the first performance vector including a set of performance metrics;

wherein each performance metric is based upon the supplier's performance metric relative to ~~[[the]]~~ an average performance metric for other suppliers that perform ~~said a~~ job;

defining a first matrix;

calculating ~~[[a]]~~ the first matrix based on at least a first filter constant, the first performance vector, and the first job attribute vector;

wherein said first filter constant has a value between 0 and 1;

calculating a second matrix, the second matrix based on at least 1~~[[ -]]~~ minus the first filter constant and the initial matrix;

generating a feedback matrix by adding the first matrix to the second matrix;

calculating a plurality of performance ratings each corresponding to a metric from the set of metrics from the feedback matrix; and

calculating a final rating value in response to the plurality of performance ratings wherein the final rating is displayed to ~~[[the]]~~ a customer through a computer interface in order to assess ~~[[a]]~~ the supplier.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, wherein said computer interface comprises computer interfaces selected from the group consisting of web pages on the internet, web pages on an intranet, an internet appliance, or personal computer.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, in which said computerized server is connected to a communications network comprising communications networks selected from the group consisting of local area networks, wide area networks, or the Internet.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, which said computerized server functions as a web server that provides access to at least one of said various matrix calculations by other users connected to said network.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, in which a hardware and/or software module is used to automatically construct the job attribute vector from [[the]] data available over a typical corporate network, wherein said typical corporate network carries information comprising information selected from the group consisting of enterprise resource planning, computer aided design (CAD) component geometric attributes, and material specifications.